



Maryland Humanities
Humanities Now:
Strategic Plan 2022–2025



OUR MISSION

Maryland Humanities creates and supports bold experiences that explore and elevate our shared stories to connect people, enhance lives, and enrich communities.

OUR VISION

We envision a Maryland where the humanities are understood as central to everyday life because they help us reflect on the past, understand the present, and shape the future. The result will be a state where thoughtful and informed Marylanders are committed to a lifetime of learning that invigorates and strengthens our democracy through an open-minded exchange of ideas.

OUR VALUES

We believe in:

- The invaluable knowledge and skills the humanities offer, promoting rigorous thinking and challenging people to consider complex issues, new ideas, and alternative points of view.
- The power of the humanities to enrich lives, building thoughtful, engaged communities.
- A community of belonging, celebrating and embracing each authentic self, lived experience, identity, and idea.
- A strong, equitable Maryland, valuing democracy, collaboration, learning, and leading.

Strategic Priority: Purpose & Impact

Maryland Humanities seeks to demonstrate the critical role that the humanities have in helping Marylanders to understand the pressing issues of our times. Our current times can best be understood when viewed through the humanities lens, which helps to explain the past, understand the present, and creates an informed citizenry ready to shape the future. Maryland Humanities will communicate our purpose effectively and build programs that support it. This programmatic approach will help focus our work, our impact, and the communities' understanding of these issues and our relevance.

Initiatives

- Identify the social and civic issues around which to focus--democratic participation, equity, and justice

- Center racial equity within program planning, assessment, and evaluation, to acknowledge and address issues of power and privilege
- Co-create programs with communities to enhance relevance and create connections on pressing issues
- Leverage digital technologies to make the humanities publicly available to democratize knowledge and broaden our reach
- Create an effective, exciting marketing strategy to promote relevance, demonstrate leadership, and strengthen engagement
- Focus donor initiatives on the critical role humanities play in shaping our future

Strategic Priority: Growth & Reach

Alliances and partnerships are central to the work of Maryland Humanities. Partnerships with arts, cultural, and historical organizations support our shared engagement in the public humanities. We will cultivate partnerships that advance humanities statewide. Our goal is to provide a space for sharing knowledge, thinking, and connections between the humanities and the issues of our time across Maryland. We will leverage partnerships to tell new stories and reach new audiences. We will strengthen our statewide reach by growing and supporting the Regional Humanities Networks. This approach recognizes that each community has its own voice and Maryland Humanities’ role is to amplify and provide capacity to enable that work.

Initiatives

- Build connections among organizations, communities, and topics as a way to position Maryland Humanities as a statewide convener in the community
- Develop an intentional approach to alliances and partnerships to facilitate the work and help set goals
- Establish branding and messaging strategies to clearly differentiate Maryland Humanities from other organizations and build excitement and engagement
- Amplify the work of and hold space for partners with diverse stories, audiences, and programs to support and deepen racial equity efforts statewide

- Build funding efforts that convey Maryland Humanities' growth and reach
- Grow grant funding efforts to strengthen humanities organizations across the state focusing new funding models on communities previously overlooked

Strategic Priority: Competency & Creativity

Maryland Humanities' unique strength lies in the competency and creativity of our staff. The Maryland Humanities staff bring passion, creativity, and innovation to the development of our work.

Organizationally, we will continue to evolve staff capabilities and competencies. The staff of Maryland Humanities leverages the insights and leadership of our supportive and capable board of directors to strengthen our organization's capacity.

Initiatives

- Integrate racial equity principles throughout all Maryland Humanities work
- Build an environment of trust, understanding, and clear feedback that fuels staff creativity and innovation
- Ensure staff capacity is aligned with organizational needs
- Secure funding for additional growth of staff as needed
- Focus and re-envision the working relationship between the board of directors and the staff to fully utilize the strengths of both
- Make Maryland Humanities an Employer of Choice
- Develop a "culture of learning" that embraces evaluation throughout the organization